Copy

Fairfield. Glasnevin. Dublin
July 8th. 1857.

My dear Sir,

I have great pleasure in transmitting to you the accompanying Resolutions.
Most sincerely and deeply do I rejoice in the unanimity of the meeting. It will prove to our American brethren, I trust, that however we may hesitate to pass judgment upon them, we are united in our opinion of your vile Fugitive Slave law, and of the sacred duty incumbent upon you of disobedience to its wicked requirements.
I have indeed been grieved to learn, what I was not in the least prepared to hear, that the American Unitarian Association have determined by a majority not to express any opinion, or take any action, upon the subject. It only proves to me more clearly, what I have long thought, that the tendency of the voluntary principle, as it is called, (which nevertheless I advocate as accompanied with fewer evils on the whole than the opposite one,) is not unfrequently to make the Shepherds unrighteously subservient to the Sheep, and to give the latter the choice of the pastures into which the former are to guide, or rather to seem to guide, them. I verily believe that the ~~majority~~ majority of those who, in America, hesitate as to their duty with respect to this law,

possessing the same knowledge of all the pros and cons, but exempted from the bias of interest and vulgar opinion, would have no hesitation, in England. You will say perhaps that in of-
-fering this opinion I am doing the very thing that I cry out against, and judging those who profess to take a different view of duty from my-
-self. But no — In no one individual instance would I venture, without positive evidence, to pronounce upon motives. I merely state a general, and, in my mind, indisputable fact — that "a gift blindeth the eyes" — that interest darkens the judgment — and that men of our profession are as liable as those of any other to a bias. Priests are men. It does not follow however that we have authority to say in any single instance — "here the man acted & here the priest." Jesus denounced the Scribes and Pharisees with a generality, which it would perhaps be more becoming in us not to imitate, — as hypocrites; but, in so doing, I am persuaded he did not mean to stigmatize any unspecified individual. He knew that there was a Paul, and, in all probability many another honest and true man, amongst the Pharisees. He could see distinctly to what influences the members of a sect or profession were exposed, and would, doubtless, in many cases succumb, and yet his injunction to all those who did not, like himself, "know what was in man"

would I am sure have been "Judge not." You will see, therefore, why I cannot sympathize with many of my friends in America, and with some in England, in their denunciations of men; but I do go the whole length with my fellow abolitionists in their denunciations of the Fugitive Slave Law, & of the unrighteousness of the American Constitution, which prepared the way for it, as essentially wicked, — and in their assertion of the sacred duty of labouring for its repeal; and of refusing to obey it, as contrary to the law of God, so long as it remains unrepealed. Of the sentiments thus expressed make what use you please; and believe me to remain, with sincere personal regard, and warm sympathy with you in the great object which you have at heart, My Dear Sir,

faithfully yours

(signed) Joseph Hutton

P.S. I return to England in about 8 weeks, when my address will be "9 Alma Park Villas, Wickenham, Middlesex."

Rec'd. July —

Ans'd. Aug. 19, 1851.

MS. B. 1.6 v. 4, p. 26